

746 drastically through time, and we shall shortly see that the Chinese Communists are greatly altering the meaning and symbolism of those few which have been allowed to survive.

585 In addition to the annual festivals, the farmer's life of toil may be relieved by ceremonial family events. For a family with resources or the ability to borrow them, a wedding meant a great feast and ample wine; even the poorest families often went heavily into debt to make a marriage ceremony festive. Practical jokes were played on the bridegroom, traditional songs were sung, and the guests, particularly the men, thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The 584 births of male children were often celebrated as 862 were the betrothals, and other milestones of family and individual life. In modern times the 529 government of the Republic of China decreed certain national holidays, but these were little observed by the farm villages.

536 In addition to these occasions for relaxation, 528 intermittent special events added interest and variety to the routine of village life. Itinerant dramatic troupes occasionally performed, and until very recently, the story teller frequently appeared on the village streets to spin out his tales to an impromptu audience. The election 622 of a village headman often involved political 788 maneuvering and a town meeting. Pilgrimages to famous mountains or shrines were often undertaken in the slack agricultural season for religious reasons or purely for relaxation.

GOVERNMENT

143

The cost of the village administration and other activities were met from the rent of any land owned by the village and from funds raised from the land owners of the village. The assessment rate per mu was determined by the amount of money required and the amount of land in the village area. So that shops and stores that owned no land might bear their share of the cost of the village government they were, in some instances at least, rated as "owning" a given number of mu and assessed on that amount at the current rate. 634

The amounts of the Ting Hsien village budgets and the expenditure for administration, home guard, schools, etc., were not available for our study. Other studies in nearby areas found that in 1929 the assessments for the village services ran about 15 cents per mu.

A study of the occupations and ages of the village officers showed that over 95 per cent of the headmen and vice-heads were farmers. There was a wide range in their ages. The youngest headman was only 20 years old, the youngest vice-head 19. The oldest headman was 82, the oldest vice-head was 84. The average ages were 47 and 46. Some 5 per cent of the headmen were under 30 years of age, while 6.5 per cent were 65 or over. The youth of so many of the village heads and vice-heads would seem to indicate that in many cases they were selected because of the prestige of their families rather than for their own leadership. 622 634

There were eight more headmen than there were villages and 28 more vice-headmen. In eight villages there were two separate governments. Local jealousies and friction between different groups in these villages had reached the point where it had become necessary to divide the village geographically, divide the village income, and set up a second government. Twenty of the larger villages and towns evidently needed more than one vice-head to carry on the village program and had taken advantage of the government's regulation that permitted a village with over 200 families to have two and one with over 300 families to have three assistant heads. There were 114 villages with 200 or more families and 43 with 300 or more.

Nineteen villages had two residence areas but only one government. Later on the number of villages might be increased if the satellite areas insisted on being given separate status.

Further details of village organization and activity are given in our more complete study of Chai Ch'eng.

GOVERNMENT

145

TABLE 45. AGES AND OCCUPATIONS OF VILLAGE HEADS

622 •

Age	<i>Ages</i>			
	<i>Headmen</i>		<i>Vice-Headmen</i>	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Under 25	7	1.5	14	2.9
25-29	18	3.9	32	6.7
30-34	46	10.0	55	11.4
35-39	51	11.1	59	12.3
40-44	53	11.5	59	12.3
45-49	79	17.1	64	13.3
50-54	81	17.6	69	14.3
55-59	47	10.2	47	9.8
60-64	49	10.6	46	9.5
65-69	16	3.5	21	4.4
70-74	7	1.5	13	2.7
75-79	5	1.1	1	0.2
80-84	2	0.4	1	0.2
	<u>461¹</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>481¹</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Oldest	82		84	
Youngest	20		19	
Average	47		46	

Occupations					
	Headmen			Vice-Headmen	
	Number	Per Cent		Number	Per Cent
Farmer	439	95.2	Farmer	465	96.6
Merchant	11		Merchant	8	
Teacher	7		Teacher	3	
Doctor	2		Shops	4	
Tax collector	1		Bee-keeper	1	
None	1			481	
	<u>461</u>				

¹ Eight villages had two headmen, 28 had two vice-heads.

631
647 Only a few of the villagers pay any attention to all these systems of government. The majority do not care for them and expect nothing good from them. Nevertheless, their life is affected by these complicated systems of political organization. They are being taxed by them either in money payment or in labor service or both.

The heads of these political divisions do not consider it as an honour to receive an office from these governing bodies. The duties fall on them and they cannot escape. Much of their time is required by these duties. Their responsibility is great but their compensation is nil. Indeed, the office of *pao*-head was first offered to a member of the richest family of the village, but he refused by leaving the village and staying a few months in the city. He was rich and could afford to do that. How could the other fellows in the village refuse any offer from the governing bodies above them?

627 The village folks still follow their own ways of doing things and solving their own problems. The last thing they would consider would be litigation in the municipal court. When someone has committed a minor offence, all the villagers keep silent about it. In case it is found out by the police, go-betweens help out the villagers with simple gifts to the minor officials.

Smooth relations among the villagers cannot continue for an indefinite period. Some petty incidents occur from time to time among the villagers. Under such circumstances, the principle of "to have big incidents dissolved into small ones and small incidents into nothing at all" is preferred.

Thus, with "crimes" committed against government regulations by a villager, the principle of non-intervention and inaction is followed. With misconduct committed against fellow villagers, all available means are mobilized to have the matter settled quietly. So far no inter-village conflict has been observed. On principle, leaders of the villages concerned would have the conflict solved quietly. In case no solution can be worked out, litigation is inevitable, but such is a great mishap indeed and in the mind of the village-leaders it is to be avoided by all means.

● 622 The leaders are indeed important personalities. They take care of private as well as public affairs. Although observing the principles of non-intervention and inaction, they are very often requested to render assistance. When family property is, for instance, to be divided among the sons of a family, a person of age and prestige, whether relative or not, is requested to assist.

735 their former condition. The monetary inflation was accelerated in
 556 the last years of the war. Those who had little reserve were very
 558 hard hit. Some of the clever rich had profited. The short period of
 price-falling, immediately after the war, had a bad effect on those
 who had full confidence in the government, when the inflation came
 back again even at a more rapid rate of acceleration.

565 Members of the richest family were not in the village. They
 556 looked for and lived in cities, as places of security and merriment.
 427 Their house and farm were in the hands of two old laborers. These
 463 two old laborers of the house became managers of the farm and
 hired other laborers for the work. The relation of the two laborers
 to members of the house was one not merely economic in nature, but
 something personal. The rent of the land was not fixed but varied
 from year to year at the good will of the managing-laborers. The
 house was very much dilapidated which was a sign of negligence on
 the fact of the managing-laborers, and the scant attention paid by
 the proprietors to their property. The relation of the two groups of
 laborers was interesting. The manager-laborers had not sufficient
 time to assume the attitude of a managing-farmer. They commanded
 the respect of the hired laborers, not so much by their authority, but
 rather because of their skill in farming.

621 The major effect of the end of the war was the change in the
 662 formal political machinery, and the consequential shift in its person-
 622 nel. The *pao-chia* system was there when we first revisited the
 village, but the *fang-li* system and the *Hsin Min Hui* were no longer
 in existence. The school principal became the deputy head of the
lien-pao together with new heads of the six old *chia*. Beneath this
 superficial structure was the struggle for power between two groups.
 An ambitious duet of father and son wanted to control the *lien-pao*.
 They organized a group of self-protection militia with the explicit
 purpose of strengthening the protection of life and property in the
 local district. They utilized external influence to oust the head, and
 the deputy head, of the *lien-pao* by accusing them as collaborators of
 the enemy.

Amidst this struggle for power came a mishap to the deputy
 head, and his removal from the position of school principal. Whether
 his removal had anything to do with the political struggle was not
 known, but following this removal he resigned his office of deputy
 head. The whole episode was certainly a blow to Mr. H. As
 we may recall, Mr. H. had the ambition to restore the status

PING-CHIAO-TSUN AS A SOCIAL LABORATORY

153

and wealth which his father once enjoyed. In our first revisit, he was undoubtedly the most influential man in the district. As principal of the school and deputy head of the *lien-pao*, he had both fame and power. For additional income he practiced medicine. He learned the old technique of medical treatment from his mother and the friends of his father. He tried to combine this old method with the new ways which he learned from his friend in the city. In his home, no one could fail to observe the amount of money he invested in medical supplies.

Returning to changes in the school, when Mr. H. was removed from his office as school principal, he had the desks and chairs which he said were his own moved back to his own home. A man of forty-five was sent by the Bureau of Education of the Municipal Government of Peiping to take his place. In addition, there were two teachers to teach a group of sixty boys and girls of six to fifteen years of age. Textbooks were replaced when the war was over. There was not any sign of Japanese influence left in the village.

On the whole, the villagers had kept their old ways of thinking, feeling and doing. Whatever superficial changes might have been introduced, they were formal and had slight effect on the belief and conception of life of the villagers. The old ways of the villagers had a high degree of persistency. While certain villagers may have had difficulty in surviving the external and the internal wars, their ways of doing, feeling and thinking may survive long and well.

621 near Tang Shan, Chihli Province, reports that the elders of the village told him that this town was settled in the Tang Dynasty (A. D. 618-905). The names of the original settlers — two clans — were Chiang and Chang. The former clan has entirely disappeared as far as is known. There is only one living descendant of the latter and his whereabouts is unknown. The greater part of the population, but by no means all, are named Li, a clan which emigrated to this village at the time of the Third Emperor of the Ming Dynasty (1403-1425).

A study of these villages would indicate the truth of Admiral Tsai Ting Kan's explanation of the difference in the nature of the population in North and South Chinese villages. In North China the successive invasions of the Manchus and the Mongolians have destroyed the continuity of the family clan system either by exterminating the members of the original clans or by forcing them to emigrate south. In the South, far distant from these waves of invasion, the same clans have had more permanent abode in their original towns and villages.

622 In North China a study of the life of the villages reveals many common characteristics. Villages are composed of a cluster of families rather than of one clan. These families vary from something approaching the larger "sib" to the economic family. The head men of the villages are chosen from the heads of the family groups because of their general standing or "tse ke." This Chinese expression denotes a combination of age, wealth, learning and general effectiveness. The village heads are not elected in any mechanical way, but when a head man resigns or dies it is generally apparent which outstanding person would naturally assume control of the village affairs. This person is appointed at an informal conference of the important family heads.

POLITICS

away the marauders. Since the coming of the Party 722
organisation the president has resigned, and the 625
organisation has lapsed.

2. Self Government.

In Ching-ho we have district self-government and 634
village self-government, the former having the
advantage of knowing the county authorities and
being the link between the official county government
and the local self government. The village and the
county government have not many points of contact
and the district government has taken advantage of
this position, and holds the most important position
in rural politics.

The self-government movement was started in
1915 when a school was established in Peking to
give suitable training to would-be officers. Although
the word used is *self government* the officers were
appointed by the government direct, the village heads
by the county government, and the district trustees by
the governor of the Capital District of Peking. Two
trustees were appointed for the Fifth District of Wan
Ping, and two for every other village, all of whom
continued to serve until the coming of the Party
Organisation

Although there are these two systems of self- 634
government in Ching-ho, yet in practice they work 622 ●
very much together, using the same office, and dealing
with the same problems. but it is the district self-
government association that is the real functional
organisation with the help of the village self-govern-
ment association. All financial matters come under

CHING HO: A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

634 the control of the Association for the Protection of
622 Green Crops. In matters concerning the whole district
the authorities have the right to call the village heads
to the town and order them to carry out the instructions of the higher authorities. The village heads, although they do not work much within the village, have a great deal of influence in district self-government matters. The Chamber of Commerce also has a good deal of influence in the town and district, and in fact the Chamber of Commerce, the village heads and the Trustees for the district control the politics of Ching-ho.

The Party organisation in Ching-ho first attacked the question of finance, and the deputy for the village heads who had done a great deal on their behalf and under the direction of the district authorities, was arrested, and personally fined \$120 with the purpose of defeating the village head, who withdrew from public life.

The district trustees continued to serve for several months until the county government issued an order for the re-organisation of both self-government associations. The finances were also taken over by a committee of Party members, but we will discuss the financial aspect later.

631 In January 1929, the provincial authorities determined to re-model the system of self-government after the Shansi province pattern. According to this system five families are to be organized into a neighbourhood under one head, and every twenty five families are to be gathered into a *lu* with another head. A village of more than one hundred families